



School Systems Around the World

Top 10 Source Countries of Newcomers to Canada:

Country	Years of Elementary (Starting with Grade 1)	Years of Secondary	School Year	Passing Mark
China, People's Republic of Public Education	6 (Age of admission 6 or 7)	Lower ~ 3 Upper ~ 3	September to July	60% (or D)
India Private Education Public Education	8 (Age of admission 5 or 6)	Lower ~ 2 Upper ~ 2	July to April	30%
Philippines Private Education Public Education	6 (sometimes 7) (Age of admission 7)	4	June to March	75%
Pakistan Private Education Public Education	5 (Age of admission 5)	Lower ~ 5 Upper ~ 2	September to June	33%
Iran Public Education	5 (Age of admission 6)	Lower ~ 3 Upper ~ 3	September to June	10 (on a scale of 20)
Korea, Republic of Public Education	6 (Age of admission 6)	Lower ~ 3 Upper ~ 3	March to February	60% (or D)
Colombia Private Education	5 (Age of admission 6)	Lower ~ 4 Upper ~ 2	February to November	6 (on a scale of 10)
Sri Lanka Public Education	5 (Age of admission 5 or 6)	Lower ~ 6 (GCE -O Level) Upper ~ 2 (GCE -A Level)	January to November	35% 40%
Romania Public Education Private Education	4 (Age of admission 7)	Lower ~ 4 Upper ~ 4	September to June	5 (on a scale of 10)

Note: United States and United Kingdom (GCE O and A Levels) have not been included for our purposes here, but are #5 and #7 in the list of top 10 countries.

2.5 Differences in School Systems

Differences in school systems around the world are numerous and varied, not only between countries, but also between regions in large countries. The chart below, based on the common scenarios encountered at the Newcomer Reception and Assessment Centre, and the information from the WES Regional Education Links*, illustrates some of these differences. The information may not be applicable to all regions in a country, or to a particular case. If so, check the Grading Scale on the student's transcript, or look up the information on the school website.

*<http://www.wes.org/ewenr/research.asp> (Click on the appropriate Continent-Country-System of Education link)

Country & School year (from - to)	Students start Grade 1 at the age of	Years of elementary school	Years of secondary school	Passing grade/ Grading system
China September-July	6	(5)-6 Foreign language from Grade 3	Junior Middle Secondary 3 (nine-year compulsory education) Senior Middle School 3 years, two semesters each year New Senior Secondary Curriculum (as of 2004) requires a minimum of 144 credits in 3 years (max of 180); e.g., 10 credits in Chinese, 10 in Foreign Language, 15 in Research-Based Study (independent study), 6 in History, Arts, and Social Practice, 6 in each of the Sciences, 11 in Physical Education, etc.	Passing grade: 60%
Colombia February-November	6	5	Lower Secondary 4 Upper Secondary 2 (equivalent of Grade 11) Students earn a diploma (Bachillerato) by completing Grade 11	Passing grade: 6 (on a scale of 10)
Croatia September-June	7	8	Secondary School: 4 years Also available: Vocational Schools (4 years)	Grading system 5-1 5- Excellent; 2- Passing grade; 1- Fail
Cuba September-June	6	6	Basic Secondary Education – 3 years Pre-University Secondary Education (Bachillerato) – 3 years	Passing grade: 3 (out of 5)
Ecuador October - July	6	6	Basic Secondary – 3 years Diversified Secondary – 3 years Students earn a diploma (Bachillerato)	Passing grade: 55% or 6/7 Grading scales: 1-100% or 1-10
Egypt September-June	6	5 (age 6-11)	Preparatory School – 3 years (age 11-14) General Secondary School – 3 years (14-17): students earn a General Secondary Education Certificate –GSEC - (academic option required for University entry) Also available: Technical Secondary School – 5 years (age 14-19): students earn an Advanced Technical Diploma and Vocational Schools (3-5 years) Also available: religion-based schools	Passing grade: 50% – acceptable Grading system: 50% – 64% - acceptable 65-74% - good 75-84% – very good 85-100% - excellent
El Salvador January- November	6	9 years (7-15)	Secondary School – 3 years Students earn a diploma (Bachillerato General)	Passing grade: 5 Grading system: 1-10
Ghana September-June	5	6	JSS (Junior Secondary School) - 3 years Students take Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE, West African Examination Council)	Passing grade: 50% Grading system A-F: A excellent, B very good, C

			SSS (Senior Secondary School) - 3 years Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE) Also available: Technical/Vocational School (3 years after JSS)	good, D credit, E pass F fail (or 1-4; 1 is the Highest grade)
Guyana September-June	5	6	Secondary – 4 years + General Secondary – 5 years Students earn Caribbean Examinations Council Certificate (CXC) up to the age of 16 OR Senior Secondary – 2 years (up to the age of 18) Student take Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) and earn General Certificate of Education Advanced Level	CXC: 5 grades: 1) comprehensive working knowledge of the syllabus; 2) working knowledge of most aspects of the syllabus; 3) working knowledge of some aspects of the syllabus; 4) limited knowledge of few aspects of the syllabus; 5) insufficient evidence on which to base judgement.
India July-April or April to March, depending on the area	5 or 6	8	4-5 -O level exams in Grades 10 and 11 -A level exams in Grades 12 and 13 -AS - Advanced Subsidiary Level, offered to gifted students in Grades 10/11 OR -All India Secondary School Examination (AISSE) for Grade 10 -All India Senior School Certificate Examination (AISSCE), a school-leaving examination for Grade 12; both administered by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE, a recognized board of education in India) -Medium: English or Hindi	Passing grade: 35% (30% in some schools) or A, B and C are passing grades Passing grade: 33% 33% or D2 Grades are based on a nine-point scale, from A1 (reserved for the top 1/8 th of the passing candidates) to E, which is a failing grade
Iraq September-June	6	8	4	Passing grade: 50%
Jamaica September-June	6	6	5-7 (vocational schools 4)	Passing grade: 4 or E (1=A) or C (First Class Honours is A)
Korea March-February	6	6	Lower Secondary - 3 years (age 12-15) Upper Secondary - 3 years (age 15-18) Students earn a High School Diploma	Passing grade: 60% or D Highest on scale: A Pass: B,C,D Lowest on scale: F- fail
Nigeria September-July	5 (may start earlier)	6 (students sometimes skip classes based on academic achievement)	JSS (Junior Secondary School) - 3 years Students earn a Junior School Certificate (JSSC) SSS (Senior Secondary School) - 3 years Students earn a Senior School Certificate (SSSC) OR Technical Secondary School – 6 years Students earn a Senior School Certificate (SSSC)	Passing grade: 50% OR Grading system 1-9 Highest on scale: A 1 Pass/fail level: P 8 Lowest on scale: F 9
Pakistan Depends on the area: April – March August – May	5 or 6	5 (Primary school, Grades 1-5) + 3 Middle school (Grades 6-8)	2 systems: Modern Educational System (School Boards): High level: 2 years (Grades 9 and 10) leading to Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) Intermediate level: 2 years (Grades 11 and 12) leading to Higher Secondary Certificate Examination (HSCE) Most private schools: British system with O-level and A-level exams (for details, see info on India) There are also religion-based schools, called	Passing grade: 33% (minimum score requirement for universities 45%)

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Peru April-December	6	6	General Secondary – 2 years Academic Secondary – 3 years (up to age 16) Students earn a diploma called Certificado de Educación Secundaria Común Completa Also available: Technical Secondary – 3 years	Passing grade: 11 (out of 20)
Philippines June-March	6 or 7	6 in most schools (7 in some private schools)	4 (year 4 is the equivalent of Grade 10) Year 1 of College - equivalent of Grade 11 Year 2 of College - equivalent of Grade 12 (to apply to the UofT program, students need to have completed the second year of College at a recognized University in the Philippines)	Passing grade: 75%
Poland September-June	6 in Grade 0 (Zero), not Gr. 1	Grade 0 + 1-6	3 (Gymnasium) + 3 (Lyceum – LO) The Gymnasium grades are turned into a point system (out of 50 points); admission to Lyceums is based on that score.	Passing grade: 50%
Sri Lanka January-November	5 or 6	5	Lower 6 (GCE O level) Upper 2 (GCE A level)	Passing grade: 35% Passing grade: 40%
Trinidad & Tobago September-June	5 or 6	6	Junior Secondary – 3 years Senior Secondary – 2 years Students earn Caribbean Examinations Council Secondary Education Certificate Sixth Form – 2 years (age 17-19) Students earn General Certificate of Education Advanced 'A' Level; Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	For CXC Secondary Education Certificate, there is no pass/fail mark. Six grades are awarded, on a scale of 1 (maximum) – 6 (lowest grade).
Ukraine September-June	6 (compulsory ed. from 7-15)	4 (age 6-10)	Lower Secondary – 5 years Upper Secondary – 3 years Also offered: Vocational Schools (Technikum), 5 years after Lower Secondary (age 15-20)	Passing grade: 4 Grading system 1 to 12: 1-3 – unsatisfactory 4-6 – satisfactory 7-9 – good 10-12 – excellent
United Kingdom September-June	5	6 Primary & Junior (age 5-11)	4 years: Comprehensive School (age 11-16) – students receive GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) or VCSE in vocational schools 2 years: Sixth Form (16-18) – students earn GCE Advanced level or VCE Advanced Subsidiary Level	Passing grade: D Grading system A to E A- excellent B- above average C- average D- below average E- failing
United Arab Emirates September – June NOTE: Private Indian Schools usually follow the Indian school year: Apr. to March	6	6	Preparatory – 3 years (Grades 7, 8, 9) General Secondary – 3 years (Grades 10, 11, 12) Students earn a Secondary School Leaving Certificate Also available: Technical schools (6 years; students earn a Technical Secondary Diploma) Private Schools (some offer Indian Curriculum)	Passing grade: 60% or 2.4 4.0-0 and above: excellent; 3.0-3.5: very good; 2.5-2.9: good; 2.0-2.4: pass; below 2: fail
USA September-June	6	Elementary School (Grades 1-4, or Grades 1-6 or 7; may vary).	Middle School (Grades 4-6, 5-7 or 6-8) High School (Grades 7-12 or 8-12)	No national regulation on grading systems. Passing grade: D or E A, B, C, D, sometimes E and F; "I" is "incomplete" The letters may be linked to numerical grade scores



Country List

<u>Albania</u>	<u>India</u>	<u>Philippines</u>
<u>Bangladesh</u>	<u>Iran</u>	<u>Romania</u>
<u>Bosnia-Herzegovina</u>	<u>Iraq</u>	<u>Russia</u>
<u>Brazil</u>	<u>Japan</u> (new)	<u>Saudi Arabia</u>
<u>China</u>	<u>Jamaica</u>	<u>Serbia-Montenegro</u>
<u>Colombia</u>	<u>The Republic of Korea</u>	<u>Sri Lanka</u>
<u>Croatia</u>	<u>Kosovo</u> (Serbia-Montenegro)	<u>Somalia</u>
<u>France</u> (new)	<u>Mexico</u>	<u>Ukraine</u>
<u>Hong Kong</u> (new) (Special Administrative Region)	<u>Pakistan</u>	<u>United States of America</u> (new)
		<u>Vietnam</u>

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